

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 AID-05 TRSE-00 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04  
SIL-01 EUR-12 AGRE-00 IO-13 OES-07 DLOS-09 INT-05  
OMB-01 /120 W

-----272340Z 098300 /61

R 271235Z MAY 77  
FM AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6743  
INFO AMEMBASSY VICTORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT LOUIS 0579

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT PFOR PGOV EFIN UR MP  
SUBJECT: MAURITIUS WEEKLY REVIEW

SUMMARY: PORT LOUIS 578 PROVIDES A SUMMARY OF THIS CABLE. END  
SUMMARY.

REF: PORT LOUIS 545

1. AT A PRESS CONFERENCE ON THE AFTERNOON OF MAY 20 RENEGADE  
MMM DEPUTY SURESH MOORBA ANNOUNCED HE HAD APPLIED TO JOIN THE  
LABOR PARTY. THIS COMPLETED THE PROCESS BEGUN TWO WEEKS EARLIER  
WHEN HE FIRST RESIGNED FROM THE MMM'S CENTRAL COMMITTEE, AND  
LATER FROM THE PARTY ITSELF. HE PREDICTED THAT SIX OTHER MMM  
DEPUTIES WOULD FOLLOW HIM INTO LABOR IN THE WEEKS OR MONTHS TO  
COME. HE SAID HE PREFERS THE PRUDENCE AND WISDOM OF RAMGOOLAM  
TO THE OPPORTUNISM AND HYPOCRISY OF BERENGER. THE LABOR PARTY  
HAD BEEN CLEANSED THROUGH THE LAST GENERAL ELECTIONS, ACCORDING  
TO MOORBA. HE LABELLED RAMGOOLAM HIS "TRUE AND REAL LEADER IN  
HISTORICAL TERMS." MOORBA SAID THE MMM IS DIVIDED INTO THREE  
FACTIONS: THE RIGHT (WHICH LEADS IT), THE LEFT OR UTOPIANS,  
AND THE REALISTS; MOORBA IDENTIFIED HIMSELF WITH THE  
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THIRD GROUP. MOORBA WARNED THE HINDU COMMUNITY NOT TO  
BELIEVE THAT JUGNAUTH IS A STRONG LEADER. HE SAID JUGNAUTH  
IS SIMPLY USED TO DUPE THE HINDUS INTO THINKING THAT THE  
MMM WILL PROTECT THEIR INTERESTS.

2. MOORBA TOOK HIS SEAT ON THE LABOR BACK-BENCHES AT THE  
ASSEMBLY SESSION ON MAY 24, TO THE APPLAUSE OF HIS NEW LABOR

COLLEAGUES. THE MMM BENCHES STARED AT HIM SILENTLY. A NUMBER OF POLICEMEN WERE PRESENT IN CASE OF TROUBLE, BUT NONE DEVELOPED.

3. RUMORS CONTINUE TO CIRCULATE THAT UP TO SEVEN MMM DEPUTIES ARE PLANNING TO DEFECT TO THE LABOR PARTY. FOLLOWING A DECISION BY THE MMM PARLIAMENTARY GROUP THAT PERSONS MENTIONED IN THESE RUMORS SHOULD MAKE THEIR POSITION CLEAR TO THE PUBLIC, MMM DEPUTIES SALESSE, RAMSEWAK AND GUNGAH HAVE A PRESS CONFERENCE MAY 24 TO DECLARE THAT THEY HAVE NO INTENTION OF LEAVING THE MMM. SALESSE SAID THIS WAS TRUE AS WELL FOR JEAN-CLAUDE BIBI, ANOTHER MMM DEPUTY WHO HAS BEEN MENTIONED IN THESE RUMORS. ABOUT EIGHT OF THE MMM'S 35 DEPUTIES WERE ABSENT FROM THE ASSEMBLY SESSION OF MAY 24.

4. FOUR REPRESENTATIVES OF THE LEFT WING OF THE MMM --DEPUTIES BIZLALL AND SERVANSINGH, PLUS TWO NON-DEPUTIES, MOSAHEB AND CHINIEN--RESIGNED THIS WEEK FROM THE MMM POLITBURO. THEY WERE REPLACED AT A MEETING OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE HELD MAY 25 BY DEPUTY COONJAN, VACOAS MAJOR JHUBOOLALL, LE MILITANT PHOTO-GRAPHER ELAHEE, AND A DEFEATED ASSEMBLY CANDIDATE, ROOTOO. THE FOUR WHO RESIGNED WERE MOTIVATED, THE PRESS SAID, BY DISAGREEMENT WITH THE PARTY'S ATTITUDE ON THE ISSUE OF COMMUNALISM AND BY THE ABSENCE OF DEMOCRATIC PROCEDURES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE PARTY (A EUPHEMISM FOR THE DICTATORIAL ATTITUDE ALLEGEDLY DISPLAYED BY PAUL BERENGER).

5. AN ASSEMBLY OF MMM DELEGATES WILL MEET MAY 29 TO DEAL WITH THE GROWING INTERNAL TROUBLES IN THE PARTY. THE PRESS  
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SPECULATES THAT THE PARTY'S LEFT WING, WHICH HAS A SOLID MAJORITY IN THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE, WILL IMPOSE ITS VIEWS. ALSO, MMM PRESIDENT JUGNAUTH, A HINDU, WILL BE GIVEN A LARGER ROLE IN PARTY AFFAIRS, WHILE THE POWERS OF BERENGER AND HIS PROTEGE DE L'ESTRAC (WHO IS UNPOPULAR WITH THE RANK AND FILE) WILL BE DIMINISHED.

6. THIS WEEK THE ASSEMBLY HELD ITS LAST ROUND OF DEBATES ON THE BUDGET. IN REFERRING TO THE AGRICULTURAL SECTION OF THE BUDGET MMM LEADER BERENGER ACCUSED MINISTER BOOLELL OF HAVING TAKEN A "SERVILE" ATTITUDE TOWARD THE COMMON MARKET AND THE UNITED STATES IN OBTAINING WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS ONLY A 2 PERCENT INCREASE IN SUGAR PRICE IN THE RECENT NEGOTIATIONS, AS AGAINST A 15 PERCENT RISE IN THE COST OF LIVING. BOOLELL ANSWERED THAT THE PRICE HE OBTAINED WAS 219.87 POUNDS STERLING COMPARED WITH THE PRESENT WORLD PRICE OF 127 POUNDS. WITHOUT THE EEC AGREEMENT TO TAKE 500,000 TONS AT THAT PRICE THE COUNTRY COULD NOT SURVIVE. FURTHERMORE, BOOLELL SAID, THE COOPERATION OF THE U.S. AND THE EEC IS NEEDED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE A NEW INTERNATIONAL SUGAR AGREEMENT.

7. THE GOVERNMENT'S BUDGET WAS FINALLY APPROVED AT ONE A.M. ON MAY 25. INTRODUCED ON APRIL 26, THE ASSEMBLY MET 12 TIMES TO DEBATE ITS VARIOUS CHAPTERS. IT WAS FINALLY APPROVED WITH NO CHANGES. RAMGOOLAM TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT BERENGER HAD BEEN "VICIOUS AND VULGAR" DURING THE DEBATE AND FOREIGN MINISTER SIR HAROLD WALTER HAD LECTURED HIM ABOUT HIS BEHAVIOR, WHILE "KEEPING HIS COOL."

8. A STATEMENT BY PAUL BERENGER, PUBLISHED IN LE MILITANT, THAT THE MMM WOULD SOON TAKE POWER "WITH OR WITHOUT ELECTIONS" WAS SEVERELY CONDEMNED BY RAMGOOLAM IN ANSWERING A PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION POSED BY MRS. HENRY, GAETAN DUVAL'S SISTER. RAM SAID HE WOULD USE THE PENAL CODE AND THE CONSTITUTION TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF MAURITIANS, IF NECESSARY.

9. L'EXPRESS OF MAY 22 REPORTED THAT RAMGOOLAM IS CONSIDERING CONFIDENTIAL

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A PROPOSAL MADE BY SOME OF HIS CABINET MINISTERS TO REDUCE THE SIZE OF THE SOVIET EMBASSY, WHICH HAS NOW GONE ABOVE 40(SIC). THIS ARTICLE GIVES THE APPEARANCE OF BEING A GOVERNMENT PLANT, SIMILAR TO THE ONE LAST WEEK ABOUT THE NON-RENEWAL OF THE SOVIET FISHING ACCORD (REFTEL).

10. ON THE QUESTION OF THE FISHING AGREEMENT, THE SOVIET EMBASSY INFORMED THE PRESS THIS WEEK THAT THE ACCORD WITH THE GOM STILL REMAINS VALID. BUT IS IS APPARENT THAT THE SOVIETS ARE ENCOUNTERING TROUBLE WITH THE GOM. L'EXPRESS OF MAY 26 REPORTED THAT THE SOVIET EMBASSY APPEALED TO THE PRIME MINISTER TO OVERTURN A DECISION BY HIS CENSORSHIP BOARD WHICH REJECTED A FILM CALLED "THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION" THAT THE EMBASSY PLANNED TO DISTRIBUTE COMMERCIALY IN CONNECTION WITH THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE COMMUNIST REVOLUTION.

11. AS A FINAL NOTE, THE LIBERIAN BULK CARRIER, GRAND BETELGUESE, WHICH WENT AGROUND OUTSIDE PORT LOUIS HARBOR ON FEBRUARY 6 (PORT LOUIS 118) WAS REFLOATED ON MAY 21. A SOUTH AFRICAN FIRM WHICH COMPLETED THE JOB SAYS THAT THE SHIP WILL HAVE TO BE TOWED ELSEWHERE FOR REPAIRS.  
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